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Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM (1207)

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ACTION PA-02

INFO OCT-01 SS-15 PM-05 DES-09 INR-10 ACOA-12 ARA-15
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FM SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//OASDPA/DDI//
TO AIG 8798
AIG 8799

UNCLAS 2158
SECTION 1 OF 3
FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS/INFORMATION OFFICERS
DELIVER DURING DUTY HOURS
SUBJECT: DOD NEWS BRIEFING
PART I: DOD NEWS BRIEFING, TUESDA Y, NOVEMBER 21, 1978, 11:40 A.M., ASD/PA THOMAS ROSS.

GOOD MORNING: I THINK YOU GOT THE MEMORANDUM ON THE GUYANA OPERATION. IS THERE ANY NEED FOR ME TO READ THAT?

PRESS: NO.

MR. ROSS: HAVE YOU GOT ANY QUESTIONS THEN?

Q: COULD YOU GO INTO IT IN A LITTLE BIT MORE DETAIL BEYOND THE MEMO. I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE WERE FOUR AIRPLANES THAT LEFT FROM PANAMA THIS MORNING AND THERE ARE A NUMBER OF OTHERS THAT ARE AWAITING DEPARTURE AT BENNING AND BRAGG AND EGLIN. DO YOU HAVE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY ____ DATE ____
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE ____
AUTH. : REASON(S) ____

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A BREAKDOWN OF ALL THAT, AND OTHER BASES I UNDERSTAND ARE INVOLVED OR OTHER AREAS?

A: THERE WERE FOUR C-130S THAT BEGAN TO LEAVE IN SEQUENCE FROM PANAMA SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT. THREE ARE ALREADY ON THE GROUND IN GUYANA AND THE FOURTH IS ENROUTE. WE DO NOT HAVE AN ARRIVAL TIME ON IT AS YET. IN ADDITION, THERE WAS ONE C-141 WHICH TOOK OFF FROM HOWARD AFB IN PANAMA AT 0:56 -- THESE ARE ALL OUR TIMES -- AND IS DUE IN TO GUYANA AT 1321. THOSE WERE THE FLIGHTS WHICH WERE CONNECTED WITH THE --

Q: IS THAT LOCAL TIME?

A: 1321 OUR TIME.

Q: WHERE DID THEY TAKE OFF IN PANAMA?

A: FROM HOWARD AFB IN PANAMA.

THOSE FIVE FLIGHTS RELATE TO THE REQUEST OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA FOR EQUIPMENT, LARGELY IN SUPPORT OF THEIR MILITARY. IN ADDITION TO THAT, WE HAVE PROGRAMMED APPROXIMATELY 22 C-141 FLIGHTS AND FOUR C-130 FLIGHTS FOR THE HUMANITARIAN OPERATION. THAT IS THE EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL WHICH ARE BEING FLOWN FROM FT. BENNING IN GEORGIA; FORT BRAGG IN NORTH CAROLINA; EGLIN AFB IN FLORIDA AND CERTAIN OTHER ELEMENTS FROM THE U.S. SOUTHERN COMMAND IN THE CANAL

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ZONE.

Q: WHEN YOU SAY FLIGHTS, THAT MAY MEAN THE SAME PLANE GOING BACK AND FORTH?

A: YES, IT MAY MEAN THAT.

Q: YOU SAY HUMANITARIAN?

A: HUMANITARIAN IN THE SENSE OF ASSISTING THE GUYANESE OFFICIALS IN THE DISPOSITION OF REMAINS AND THE TREATMENT OF SURVIVORS OF THE AMERICAN CITIZENS AT THE JONESTOWN SETTLEMENT.

Q: HOW MANY HELICOPTERS ARE BEING BROUGHT IN THERE TO CARRY OUT THIS WORK?

A: TO CARRY OUT?

Q: TO CARRY OUT THE WORK OF GETTING THE BODIES OUT, ETC?

A: WELL, THERE ARE TWO HELICOPTERS WHICH ARE ABOARD THE C-141 THAT'S DUE IN AT 1321.

Q: THAT WAS FROM PANAMA?

A: THAT WAS FROM PANAMA. IN ADDITION, THERE IS AN ARMY UH-1 MEDEVAC, AN OH-58 OBSERVATION HELICOPTERS, MULTIPLE. I DON'T HAVE PRECISELY HOW MANY HELICOPTERS WILL BE IN THE HUMANITARIAN EFFORT BUT I'LL TRY TO GET THOSE FIGURES.

Q: WHAT IS THE IDEA AT THIS POINT, IS IT TO TRY TO FERRY OUT

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THE BODIES TO GEORGETOWN AND GET THEM BACK TO THE UNITED STATES OR ARE THEY GOING TO BURY THEM THERE? IT DOESN'T SEEM AS IF YOU HAVE A LOT OF HELICOPTERS TO --

A: WE HAVE SET UP THIS SYSTEM SO THAT IT WOULD BE ABLE TO FULFILL WHATEVER MISSION IS DECIDED UPON. THE STATE DEPARTMENT, I BELIEVE, AT THE BRIEFING WILL GO INTO WHAT DECISION HAS BEEN MADE ON THE DISPOSITION OF THE REMAINS, AS TO WHETHER THEY WILL BE BURIED THERE OR TAKEN OUT.

Q: TOM, IN ADDITION TO THE QUESTION AS TO WHAT HAPPENS TO THE REMAINS, WILL U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL THAT'S GOING DOWN THERE ASSIST IN ANY SEARCH ACTIVITIES FOR SURVIVORS WHO MAY BE IN THE JUNGLE OR WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES WILL THEY HAVE IN REGARD TO LIVING PEOPLE DOWN THERE?

A: THAT IS YET TO BE DETERMINED AND WILL HAVE TO BE DETERMINED LARGELY BY THE GUYANESE OFFICIALS.

Q: IS THERE ANY INDICATION WHETHER THE KILLERS OF CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND THE MEMBERS OF HIS PARTY WERE AMONG THOSE DEAD OR ARE THEY STILL AT LARGE?

A: I HAVE NO INFORMATION ON THAT AT ALL.

Q: HOW MANY MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE INVOLVED OF THE U.S. MILITARY?

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A: APPROXIMATLEY 250.

Q: THIS INCLUDES THE CONTINGENT FROM HOWARD?

A: NOT INCLUDING THE CONTINGENT FROM HOWARD. I DO NOT HAVE FIGURES ON THAT AND I'LL TRY TO GET THEM FOR YOU.

Q: DO YOU HAVE A BREAKDOWN ON WHICH SERVICES ARE -- BROKEN OUT -- AIR FORCE NUMBERS AND ARMY NUMBERS?

A: I DO NOT HAVE THEM BUT I'LL GET THEM BROKEN DOWN FOR YOU.

Q: THIS IS 250 OUTSIDE OF THE PLANE CREWS?

A: THAT'S CORRECT.

Q: ANY IDEA OF THE COST INVOLVED IN THIS?

A: I DON'T HAVE A COST FIGURE. IT'S A LITTLE BIT EARLY FOR US TO GET A GUESSTIMATE.

Q: HAVE THE 22 C-141 FLIGHTS THAT YOU SAY HAVE BEEN PROGRAMMED, HAVE THEY STARTED YET?

A: THEY HAVE NOT STARTED. THEY ARE ON STANOBY.

Q: HAVE THEY BEEN REQUESTED BY GUYANA?

A: YES, THEY HAVE BEEN REQUESTED.

Q: IS THERE ANY HOLDUP, IS IT A QUESTION OF LOADING OR SOMETHING? IS THERE ANOTHER DECISION INVOLVED THERE?

A: WELL, I THINK THAT WHETHER OR NOT THIS NUMBER WILL BE

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REQUIRED WILL DEPEND UPON THE DECISION AS TO WHETHER THERE IS TO BE A BURIAL THERE OR THERE IS TO BE AN EFFORT TO BRING THE REMAINS BACK HERE.

Q: ARE THERE ANY INVESTIGATORS, PEOPLE MIGHT HELP DETERMINE WHETHER ANYBODY IS STILL LIVING THAT COMMITTED CRIMES? ESPECIALLY THE POSSIBILITY THAT A CRIME WAS PLOTTED IN THIS COUNTRY AND CARRIED OUT THERE?

A: WE ARE NOT PART OF THAT INVESTIGATION. AS TO WHETHER THE GUYANESE HAVE REQUESTED U.S. GOVERNMENT HELP FROM OTHER AGENCIES, I JUST DO NOT KNOW.

Q: BUT THERE ARE NO MILITARY...

A: NO MILITARY INVESTIGATORS, NO.

Q: LAWYERS OR THAT KIND OF PEOPLE?

A: NO.

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Q: TOM, WHAT'S THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE REPORTS THAT THERE ARE SOVIET MISSILE BOATS WITH STYX MISSILES, ON THEIR WAY TO CUBA, BEING TOWED TO CUBA?

A: I HAVE NOT SEEN THE REPORT AND I'LL HAVE TO TRY AND GET AN ANSWER. WHOSE REPORT WAS IT?

Q: WE WERE TOLD THIS MORNING IN A BRIEFING BY GENERAL GRAHAM,

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FM SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//OASDPA/DDI//
TO AIG 8798
AIG 8799

UNCLAS 2150
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RETIRED GENERAL GRAHAM, THAT THERE WERE NEWS REPORTS TO THIS EFFECT.
A: I HAVE NOT SEEN THE NEWS REPORTS, BUD. I'LL LOOK IN TO IT AND SEE WHETHER THERE WERE IN FACT ANY NEWS REPORTS TO THAT EFFECT.
Q: GENERAL GRAHAM ALSO CHARGED THAT THE INFORMATION FROM THE SR-71 RECONNAISSANCE PLANES IS BEING WITHHELD FROM NORMAL CHANNELS WITHIN THE PENTAGON.
A: SINCE GENERAL GRAHAM IS RETIRED, I WOULDN'T THINK HE WOULD BE MUCH OF AN EXPERT ON THE SUBJECT.
Q: HE EVIDENTLY DOESN'T SAY GOODBYE TO HIS OLD FRIENDS COMPLETELY.
A: I WILL LOOK INTO THE QUESTION. I'LL SEE IF I CAN RESPOND IN SOME MANNER. IT'S A RATHER VAGUE CHARGE AS TO WHAT ARE THE CHANNELS HE'S TALKING ABOUT AND WHAT ARE NORMAL CHANNELS AND WHAT ARE ABNORMAL

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CHANNELS.
Q: COULD YOU ALSO FIND OUT ABOUT A REPORT THAT WAS SENT OVER TO THE WHITE HOUSE TWO WEEKS AGO ON THIS SITUATION WITH THE MIGS IN CUBA INDICATING THAT SOME OF THE MIGS ARE OF THE GROUND ATTACK VARIETY?
A: HE IS ALLEGING THAT A REPORT WAS SENT TO THE WHITE HOUSE TWO WEEKS AGO SAYING THAT SOME OF THE MIGS WERE GROUND ATTACK (VERSIONS). IS THAT RIGHT?
Q: YES. HE DID THIS IN A PUBLIC PRESS CONFERENCE.
A: I'LL TAKE THE QUESTION.
Q: TOM, HOW LONG HAVE THESE SR-71S BEEN FLYING OVER CUBA?
A: I'M NOT COMMENTING ON WHETHER OR WHEN.
Q: WHEN ARE WE GOING TO GET SOME PICTURES OF THESE PLANES THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN. ISN'T THAT WHAT WE HOPE THEY PRODUCE, IS PICTURES?
A: WELL, SINCE I'M NOT CONFIRMING OR COMMENTING ON SUCH FLIGHTS, I CAN'T OBVIOUSLY COMMENT ON PICTURES WHICH SUCH HYPOTHETICAL FLIGHTS MIGHT BE PRODUCING.
Q: WHEN IS THERE GOING TO BE SOME SORT OF DECISION ON WHAT THESE PLANES ARE AND WHEN WILL IT BE ANNOUNCED?

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A: I DO NOT KNOW. THE STATE DEPT IS THE PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION WHICH THEY ANNOUNCED. I'M CERTAIN THERE THERE WILL BE A REPORT ON IT BUT I JUST CAN'T---I JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN WE WILL BE ABLE TO PUT OUT INFORMATION ON IT.
Q: GENERAL GRAHAM IS ALSO CHARGING THAT THERE'S A COVERUP ON THE WHOLE SITUATION REGARDING THE PRESENCE OF MIGS IN CUBA BY THE ADMINISTRATION. IS THAT RELATED TO YOUR RELUCTANCE TO TALK ON IT?
A: TOTALLY UNRELATED.
Q: TOM, DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT ON THE TWO MX STORIES THAT APPEAR TODAY IN THE POST AND TIMES ABOUT THE MOBILE MISSILE. IS THERE ANY LIGHT YOU CAN SHED ON THE SUBJECT?
A: I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING REALLY TO SHED BEYOND WHAT I SAID HERE A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO WHICH IS THAT WE ARE CONSIDERING, AS PART OF THE SUPPLEMENTAL, MONEY FOR FULL SCALE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MX. THERE ALSO MAY BE A DELAY IN A DECISION ON HOW THE NEW SURVIVABLE INTER-CONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE WOULD BE BASED. BEYOND THAT I REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY COMMENT. THE POST STORY SEEMS TO BE QUOTING SOURCES ELSEWHERE AND I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT THOSE SOURCES MAY BE SAYING.
Q: WHAT KIND OF TIMETABLE IS THERE FOR A DECISION ON BASING?

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A: PARDON ME.
Q: WHAT KIND OF TIMETABLE DO YOU HAVE FOR A DECISION ON THE BASING MODE?
A: WELL, IT'S POSSIBLE THAT IT COULD BE AS MUCH AS A YEAR BEFORE WE MAKE A DECISION ON THE BASING MODE BUT THE INTENTION IS TO CONTINUE WITH STUDIES AND PERHAPS THE BUILDING OF COMPONENTS FOR AT LEAST TWO ALTERNATE SYSTEMS SO THAT NO TIME WOULD BE LOST IN THE FACT THAT THERE IS A DELAY ON THIS DECISION.
Q: IS THE AIRCRAFT TRANSPORTED VERSION OF THE MX THE MOST LIKELY ALTERNATIVE TO THE MULTIPLE AIM POINT?
A: I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO PREJUDGE WHAT THE FINAL DECISION IS GOING TO BE. THE MULTIPLE AIM POINT SYSTEM IS CLEARLY ONE THAT IS SUPPORTED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE. THE AIR TRANSPORTABLE SYSTEM ALSO HAS A LARGE NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS. THERE ARE OTHER SYSTEMS STILL IN THE RUNNING.
Q: YOU IN EFFECT AREN'T GOING BEYOND WHAT YOU SAID ON OCT. 26?
A: EXACTLY.
Q: IS THERE LIKELY TO BE MONEY IN THE SUPPLEMENTAL TO STUDY BASING MODES?
A: THAT IS BEING CONSIDERED BUT IT'S UP TO THE PRESIDENT TO

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DECIDE WHAT HE WISHES TO APPROVE.
Q: WHEN DOES THE TEAM OF ENGINEERS GET BACK FROM ISRAEL?
A: THEY CAME BACK YESTERDAY OR THE DAY BEFORE. LET ME CHECK.
Q: IS THERE ANY WORD ON WHAT THEY DID AND HOW MUCH IT'S GOING TO COST AND WHERE THEY'RE GOING TO PUT THESE BASES, ETC.?
A: THEY ARE DUE TO SUBMIT A REPORT WITHIN TWO WEEKS AND THE REPORT IS NOT YET IN.
Q: TOM, IF I COULD RETURN TO THE GUYANA SITUATION AGAIN, IT STRIKES ME THERE ARE TWO UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS, (1) WHERE DO YOU BURY THE PEOPLE THAT ARE DEAD, AND (2) JUST EXACTLY HOW MUCH HELP THE U.S. FORCES GIVE TO THE GUYANESE IN TERMS OF THE SEARCH EFFORTS. ARE THESE UNRESOLVED BECAUSE THE DECISION HASN'T BEEN REACHED DOWN THERE OR HAVE THEY BEEN RESOLVED BUT YOU'RE JUST LETTING STATE ANNOUNCE IT TODAY? CAN YOU SHED ANY LIGHT ON THE OPTIONS THAT ARE AVAILABLE FOR U.S. ACTIVITIES?
A: WELL, ON THE FIRST QUESTION, I BELIEVE STATE IS MAKING AN EFFORT TO MAKE A DECISION AND I THINK THEY MAY REACH A DECISION IN TIME FOR IT TO BE ANNOUNCED AT THE BRIEFING OVER THERE. ON THE SECOND, ONCE AGAIN, IT'S A MATTER OF DISCUSSION BETWEEN THE STATE DEPT AND THE GOVERNMENT OF GUYANA AND NO DECISION HAS B

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ON THAT EITHER.
Q: ARE U.S. FORCES READY AND ABLE TO HELP IN THE JUNGLE SEARCH OR IS THAT BEYOND WHAT'S ENVISIONED NOW --
A: IT'S BEYOND WHAT IS ENVISIONED RIGHT NOW, YES.
Q: WHY ARE OUR HUMANITARIAN FORCES STILL ON STANDBY AS YOU CONFIRMED A FEW MOMENTS AGO, TOM? WHAT IS THE DELAY?
A: WELL, THERE IS REALLY NO DELAY. WE ARE GATHERING THE FORCES AND THEY ARE ON STANDBY IN THE SENSE THAT THEY WILL BE READY TO MOVE OUT RATHER QUICKLY. THERE REALLY HAS BEEN NO DELAY.
Q: DOES THAT INCLUDE THE LONG RANGE HELICOPTERS FROM EGLIN? HAVE THEY LEFT YET?
A: NONE OF THAT EQUIPMENT HAS LEFT YET.
Q: WHAT I'M TRYING TO FIND OUT TOM IS WHY THEY HAVEN'T LEFT YET? WHY ARE THEY BEING HELD ON STANDBY INSTEAD OF GOING TO WHERE THEY ARE

APPARENTLY NEEDED?

A: BASICALLY, I DON'T THINK THERE HAS BEEN ANY DELAY. LET ME TAKE THE QUESTION AND I WILL EXPLORE IT FURTHER.

Q: I THINK IT WAS EXPLAINED THAT THEY NEED THE AIRPLANES WITH THE EQUIPMENT, ETC., FROM PANAMA TO HELP SET UP A BASE OF OPERATION IN GEORGETOWN TO ACCEPT THE PLANES COMING DOWN FROM THE U.S., IF

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TO AIG 8798
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YOU GO THAT ROUTE. IS THAT CORRECT, THEY'RE NOT READY TO ACCEPT?"
A: I'LL HAVE TO CHECK THAT IKE, I JUST DON'T KNOW.
Q : ARE YOU GOING ON THE RECORD WITH THAT ANSWER, IKE?
Q: I'LL TAKE YOUR QUESTION. (LAUGHTER)
Q: WELL, LET'S GO LISTEN TO THE STATE BRIEFING.
A: I THINK IT MIGHT BE MORE INFORMATIVE. (LAUGHTER).

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